

Please help improve the lives of rural Americans by protecting and expanding the Universal Service Fund (USF) for wireless providers. Wireless telecommunications is no longer a luxury in our society; it is a fundamental necessity for public health, safety and economic development. Personally I have lived in a very rural area most of my life and having the ability to use my cellular telephone out there makes me feel safe. The way the world is today and the crime levels, I feel comforted to know that where ever I go I always have a way of connecting with someone. My cell phone is my only means of communication to my loved ones and to have that not work would be devastating to me. Just put yourself in the situation that you have just gotten in a bad car accident and your out in the middle of a much wooded area. What do you do next? Use your cell phone to call some one, right? As of right now you look at your phone and say to yourself "thank God, I have reception!" However if we put a cap on the Universal Service Fund, you may just not be able to say that to yourself. I believe that everyone is equal and that just because someone chooses to live in a rural area they should have the same necessities that someone has that lives in the city.

Capping the fund will shut the door on rural America. Less USF support for rural wireless networks will leave us with poor coverage, dropped calls and dangerous dead zones. The urban/rural technology gap will only widen.

Rural America deserves the same cell phone service as our big cities. I urge you to expand – not cap – the USF. Please don't leave us behind.

Thank you.